SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:
SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:
SHRI SOM PAL:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the Indian Express dated the 15th August, 1991 captioned "Car manufacturers scuttle delicensing";

(b) whether it is a fact that applications for car manufacturing are pending with Industry Ministry;

(c) whether Government are aware of the shortage of car and premia being demanded on cars; and

(d) what is the number of new units likely to be permitted to manufacture cars?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF INDUSTRY (SHRI P. K. THUNGON): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The Government received certain applications in the past for manufacture of cars, but these were not approved because of capacity constraints.

(c) While most of the models of cars are easily available, there is some waiting period for preferred models. No premia is being demanded by the manufacturers.

(d) Existing capacity created is considered sufficient to meet the demand for passenger cars in the country during the VIII Plan period. No new units are therefore at present being permitted in this sector.

Threats to suspend publication of newspapers as a protest against hike in the prices of newsprint

142. SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA:
SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the newspaper industry have threatened to suspend publication following breakdown of talks on fixation of prices of newsprint; and

(b) if so, what remedial steps Government propose to take to meet the situation?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (KUMARI GIRIJA VYAS): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. However, the talks between the newspaper industry and Government never broke down. After several rounds of consultations and dialogue, the matter was resolved amicably in the meeting of Newsprint Price Fixation Advisory Committee held on 16-8-1991 on mutually agreed cost sharing basis.

Price rise of essential commodities

143. SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA:
SHRI N. E. BALARAM:
SHRI SURESH KALMADI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there has been an increase in the prices of essential commodities ever since the Union Budget was presented in Parliament;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps Government propose to take to curb the recent price rise and holding the price of essential commodities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) There has been a mixed trend in the price variation of essential commodities after the presentation of the Union Budget.

(b) The Wholesale Price Index numbers in respect of essential commodities are available upto 10-8-1991 During the period between 20-7-1991 and 10-8-1991 the price indices of Rice, Wheat, Pulses, Vegetables, Tea Sugar and Edible Oils have shown

an increase. The price of Bajra, Milk, Fish, Kerosene, Bulbs and Salt have shown a decline and the prices of Coke, Atta and Safety Matches have remained steady. The rise in the prices of some commodities are due to gap in the supply and demand, routine lean period of supply, inability of the Government to import edible oils and pulses and difficulties in the movement of goods through rails.

(c) The present Government attaches highest priority to contain price rise within reasonable limits. Efforts are being made to restrain the growth in money supply, effect economy in Government expenditure, ensure better supply and demand management of 'sensitive commodities', strengthening and streamlining of Public Distribution System, strict action against hoarders and profiteers and provision of incentives for higher production in the medium term. With a view to monitoring the prices of essential commodities and ensuring their supply, the Government have constituted a Cabinet Committee on Prices under the Chairmanship of the Union Finance Minister. It is expected that all these measures will have a desirable effect on containing the rising trend in the prices within reasonable limits.

Price trend of essential commodities

144. SHRI KAPIL VERMA:
SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA:
SHRI ASHOK NATH VERMA:
SHRI SURESH PACHOURI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the weekwise price trend in respect of essential commodities like edible oil, sugar, vegetable, tea etc. during the last two months; and

(b) what measures have been taken to control the price trend and what has been the response thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) A statement showing the weekly percentage variation in the Wholesale Price Indices of selected essential commodities for the last two months (8-6-91 to 10-8-91) is given in Annexure. [*See* Appendix CLX, Annexure No. 4].

(b) The present Government attaches the highest priority to contain price rise within reasonable limits. Efforts are being made to restrain the growth in money supply, effect economy in Government expenditure and ensure better supply and demand management of 'sensitive commodities', strengthening and streamlining of Public Distribution System, strict action against hoarders and profiteers and provision of incentives for higher production in the medium term with a view to monitoring the prices of essential commodities and ensuring their supply, the Government have constituted a Cabinet Committee on Prices under the Chairmanship of the Union Finance Minister. As a result of these measures, the prices of some of the items like Kerosene, Bulbs, Fish, Sugar, Gram, Bajra etc. have shown a decline in recent weeks and that of Coke, Atta, Vanaspati and Safety Matches have remained steady.

Failure of STC in Purchasing Newsprint

145. SHRI CHIMANBHAI MEHTA:
SHRIMATI MIRA DAS:
SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:
SHRI SOM PAL:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to shift the burden of Rs. 60